

## THOMAS B. CATRON.

### Some Interesting Facts Concerning Him.

#### Reasons Why the Man of "Brains and Energy" Should Not be Elected.

Combres, says the Rocky Mountain News, is a station on the Durango branch of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad. It is over 10,000 feet above sea level, and is on the line of the crookedest and most picturesque road in America. From Combres the road makes a plunge of 3,000 feet down to Chama, the first station in New Mexico on this line, a distance of 11 miles. Before reaching this point the road winds up and down the mountains along the borders of the state and territory, first in Colorado, then in New Mexico. A large part of the territory over which the road passes in this journey, together with the town of Chama, the county site, Tierra Amarilla, fifteen miles away to the southeast; Monero, where there are extensive coal mines, to the southwest twenty miles; across the continental divide to the Navajo river, into Colorado, and back again over the Conejos range of the San Juan mountains—the whole embracing an area of about 650,000 acres of land, well timbered, well watered and containing gold, silver, coal and petroleum—this vast property is owned by T. B. Catron, of Santa Fe county.

How did he obtain his title? It is a story well known in New Mexico. Stephen B. Elkins and Thomas B. Catron were born and reared in Missouri, and were educated at the Columbia university in that state. Both were young men and democrats when the war commenced. "Steve" Elkins' father, who is living today, along with his son, John—at one time a republican state senator from Lake county—went with the south, joining "Pap" Price's army, surrendering in May, 1865, at Shreveport, La. "Steve," in order to avoid going into the war, fled to New Mexico and there hid himself at Las Cruces. During the years that followed he devoted much time to a study of the Spanish language and to law. When the war closed he had acquired the language, built up a respectable practice among the Mexicans, and had acquired considerable local prominence as a politician.

Elkins' schoolmate, Thomas Benton Catron, went south, along with the father and son of the former. When the war closed he returned to Missouri, heard that his old schoolmate was in New Mexico, drove a bull team across the plains and joined him at Las Cruces. A man after Elkins' own heart, he was warmly received. Catron immediately applied himself to the study of Spanish,

and in a year's time had acquired the language, became Elkins' partner and was elected to the territorial council.

Thus the career of these two young adventurers was fairly launched. They at once became important factors in the politics of the territory. Elkins was made United States district attorney, and he and Catron removed to Santa Fe. Then by reason of their political influence, they became the masters of the territory. They obtained an interest in, or became the proprietors of nearly every Spanish and Mexican land grant in the country. Elkins was elected to congress and Catron appointed United States attorney, thus strengthening their hold. Before the election of Grover Cleveland in 1884 Elkins, who had married a daughter of United States Senator Davis (a democrat) of West Virginia, had turned his New Mexican savings into cash, invested it with his father-in-law in West Virginia coal lands and had removed to the latter state permanently. This left his partner, Catron, alone in New Mexico. But the latter had not been idle. He had made hay while the sun was shining. He had managed to amass a dominion princely in its proportions. He claimed to own, and today claims an ownership of over 3,000,000 acres of land. One grant especially Mr. Catron had succeeded in having confirmed and patented to himself—through the efforts of his partner, Mr. Elkins, while he was in congress—containing about 650,000 acres. This was the grant known as Tierra Amarilla, a part of which is in southern Colorado.

In the meantime Mr. Catron had not been idle in a political way. He was chosen repeatedly as a member of the territorial council, and two years ago he was the unsuccessful candidate of the republican party for delegate to congress.

Again he has been nominated by his party and is now making the effort of his life to be elected. Will he succeed, and ought he to succeed?

That Mr. Catron, while a brainy man, is thoroughly corrupt and unscrupulous, no better evidence is needed than the evidence of Hon. E. P. Seeds, an associate justice of the supreme court of the territory for four years under the Harrison administration. In a recent issue of the Santa Fe New Mexican that paper publishes extracts from a private letter to Judge Sloan of Santa Fe from the ex-justice, in which he says that "the best endeavor that could be produced looking to statehood would be the repudiation of this leech (Catron) upon the party in New Mexico." The judge states that among the mistakes he made while in New Mexico was voting for Catron for delegate in 1892; that everyone who has the good of the republican party at heart ought to vote against him in 1894; that,

if sent to Washington, he would be shunned by his party associates and would work untold injury to New Mexico; "whereas, Mr. Joseph's quiet, effective work is a matter of very complimentary comment."

Mr. Joseph is the present democratic delegate, a position he has held for ten years. Since the alignment of parties in the territory ten years ago, the people's party has come to the front, and there is at present a three-cornered fight for delegate. Mr. Catron represents the republicans, Mr. Joseph the democrats, and Hon. T. B. Mills of Las Vegas the people's. What the result will be it is hard to determine, but if the people of New Mexico are alive to their interests they will see that Mr. Catron is defeated.

#### Mr. Joseph and the Miners.

In no respect is the contrast between Mr. Joseph and Mr. Catron more conspicuous than as regards their attitudes toward the mining interests of New Mexico. The former throughout his official life has consistently defended the interests of this large part of our citizenship, while the latter has been most conspicuous as the grabber of land grants and the selfish appropriator of any mining territory to which he could make even a show of title.

It is safe to say, therefore, that if elected to congress, Thomas B. Catron would lose no opportunity for advancing his personal interests, which, in the case of his immense land holdings, are almost directly antagonistic to the miners' welfare. He has never heretofore allowed the interests of the miners or of any other class of our citizens to influence him where he saw an opportunity to further his own selfish ends; and it cannot be doubted that his future career will be entirely inconsistent with his past on this point. Mr. Joseph on the other hand, has only during the past session of congress shown his solicitude for the miners' welfare by introducing a bill which has liberal and just provisions for prospecting and mining on private land grants. Through Mr. Joseph's efforts this bill has received the endorsement of the secretary of the interior and of the general land office. It has been favorably reported to the house by the committee on mines and mining and will be passed at the winter session of congress. It is by just such acts as these that Mr. Joseph has shown his fidelity to the interests of the miners and it is not to be wondered, therefore, that they are going to give him their solid support two weeks hence at the polls.—New Mexican.

The populist had a meeting at Pinos Altos last week but it did not produce the wonderful effect that was expected. Since this meeting the populists are feeling worse than ever.